

Originally appeared in: ПОЛЫТРОПОН. *To 70th birthday of Vladimir Toporov*, edd. T.M. Nikolaeva, et al., Moscow (Indrik) 1998, 73-85.

## Avestan *zruuan-*

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1. The etymology of Late Avestan *zruuan-*, generally glossed ‘time’, is considered uncertain in the literature. On the one hand, it has been tempting to connect this word with Av. *zauruuan-* ‘old age, senility’, *zaurura-* ‘decrepit, senile’, which are clearly derived from the Proto-Indo-European (PIE) root *\*ǵerh<sub>2</sub>-* ‘to become old’. This connection involved serious phonetic difficulties, however. According to the established sound laws, PIE *\*ǵerh<sub>2</sub>-uēn-* must have yielded Avestan *zauruuan-*, and there seemed to be no easy way to account for initial *zruu-* of *zruuan-*. Bartholomae in his dictionary abstains from expressing an opinion about the etymology of this word. Pokorny (391) mentions *zruuan-* among derivatives of PIE *\*ǵerh<sub>2</sub>-*, but adds “vielleicht”. In order to explain the irregular onset of the Avestan word, Nussbaum (1986: 275) assumes metathesized *\*ǵruh<sub>2</sub>-*, which presupposes a number of analogical developments.

In the following, I shall argue that the traditional derivation of *zruuan-* from PIE *\*ǵerh<sub>2</sub>-* is correct, but the phonetic processes that have led to this form are of a different nature. Before we embark on the discussion of the etymology of *zruuan-*, let us first scrutinize its meaning and inflection.

### 2. The meaning of *zruuan-*.

In the lemma for *zruuan-* (*zrvan-* in his notation), Bartholomae starts from the notion ‘time’ and gives the following meanings: “Zeit: 1) ‘Zeitpunkt, bestimmte Zeit’, a) in der Gerichtssprache ‘Zeit der Verhandlung, Termin’, 2) ‘Zeitabschnitt’, 3) ‘Zeitdauer’; A) als Gottheit.” I do not think that the notion ‘time’ is primary for this word. It is certainly true that we have to assume this meaning for *Zruuan-*, the deified notion Time, which later became one of the central concepts of a Zoroastrian sect, the so-called Zurvanites. Still, this Deity only occurs in the most recent parts of Avestan, whereas elsewhere the meaning of *zruuan-* seems to be ‘period (of time), time-span, life-time’.

2.1. In the Yashts, *zruuan-* only occurs in three expressions, viz. *darəyəmcit pairi / aipi zruuānəm*, *ā rapiθβinəm zruuānəm*, and *(frā)θβaršta- zruuan-*. It is clear that *darəyəmcit pairi zruuānəm* (Yt 13.53,55) and *darəyəmcit aipi zruuānəm* (Yt 19.26,31, also Y 62.3) simply mean ‘for a long period of time’.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>Cf. also P 37 *vīspəm aētəm paiti zruuānəm* ‘during this whole period of time’.

The second expression, *ā rapīθβinəm zruuānəm* (Yt 8.28, 19.40 = Y 9.11), does not mean ‘at noon’ (Bartholomae ‘in der Mittagzeit’), but rather ‘until the (beginning of the) Rapiθβina-period (a period from noon until the middle of afternoon)’, which also better suits the directional meaning of *ā*.<sup>2</sup>

2.2. The phrase (*frā*)*θβaršta- zruuan-* requires more attention. The verb *θβərəs-* as a simplex or with *frā-* means either ‘to create’, or ‘to determine (e.g. punishment), allot’. The meaning ‘to cut, fashion’ is only attested with other preverbs (*auui*, *upa(nī)*, *us*, *nī*, *paiti*). It seems therefore *a priori* probable that (*frā*)*θβaršta- zruuan-* means ‘allotted life-time’, and all contexts clearly contain a reference to ‘age, life-time’, indeed.

Let us start with Yt 13.56, where we read in Geldner’s edition:

*āaṭ tā nūrām frauuaxšaiieṇti*  
*mazdaḍātəm paiti paṇtām*  
*bayōbaxtəm paiti yaonəm*  
*frāθβarštəm paiti zruuānəm*  
*zaošāi ahurahe mazdā*  
*zaošāi amōšanəm spəntanəm*

Bartholomae – Wolff translate the passage as follows: "Aber jetzt lassen sie die [Pflanzen] hervordachsen auf der mazdāh-geschaffenen Bahn, auf der von den Göttern bestimmten Stätte, zu der vorgeschriebenen Zeit: zum Wohlgefallen des Ahura Mazdāh, zum Wohlgefallen der Amōša Spənta’s."

Later investigations have improved the text and the translation in two important aspects. First, Geldner (1877: § 16, cf. also Lommel 1922: 208, Kellens 1984: 123f.) has emended *frauuaxšaiieṇti* to *<sup>x</sup>fraoxšaiieṇti*, which makes better sense (‘Now they [the plants] grow forth...’, cf. the parallel passages Yt 13.54 ‘Now they [the waters] flow forth...’, Yt 13.58 ‘Now they [the stars] move/float forth...’) and metre (reading *fra-uxšaiieṇti* gives a normal line of 8 syllables). Further, Av. *yaona-* rather means ‘way, course’ and not ‘Stätte’, which was recognized by Lommel in his translation of the Yashts and was proven in detail by Benveniste-Renou 1934: 50ff.

As to the phrase *frāθβarštəm paiti zruuānəm*, it has been translated by all scholars in the same fashion: ‘zur bestimmten Zeit’ (Geldner 1881: 543), ‘dans le temps fixé’ (Darmesteter), ‘zu vorgeschriebenen Zeit’ (Lommel 1927: 119). Nevertheless, this translation is improbable: the idea of the passage is that the plants now grow along the path established by Mazdāh, along the course fixed by the gods, and as long as their allotted life-time allows.

It is important that in a parallel passage Yt 13.54, describing waters which began to flow, we find exactly the same text, except that *zruuānəm* is replaced with *āfəntəm* ‘period (of time)’

<sup>2</sup>Cf. Panaino’s translation of *ā rapīθβinəm zruuānəm* in Yt 8.28 as ‘till the time of midday’ (1990: 52) and his comments on p. 117.

(cf. for this word Gershevitch 1959: 172f, Panaino 1990: 125f). In Yt 8.35 and V 21.5, a similar text applies to Tištrya and the Sun, respectively. The reason why *frāθbarštəm paiti zruuānəm* is used for plants, while *frāθbarštəm paiti āfəntəm* is used for waters and stars, is that the former presumably had the connotation ‘age, life-time’, which is only appropriate for living organisms.

The meaning ‘allotted life-time’ for *frāθbaršta- zruuan-* also gives better sense in Yt 8.11 (in the right column I indicate v.ll. of this passage in Yt 10.55 = 74):

<i>yeði zī mā mašiiiāka</i>	Yt 10.55 <i>yeiði</i>
<i>auxtō.nāmana yasna yazaiiaṇta</i>	
<i>yaθa aniiē yazatāghō</i>	
<i>auxtō.nāmana yasna yaziṇti</i>	<i>yazəṇti</i>
<i>frā nəruiiō ašauuaoiiō</i>	<i>nuruiiō</i>
<i>θbarštahe zrū āiiu šušuiiām</i>	Yt 10.74 <i>āiiū</i>
<i>x<sup>v</sup>ahe gaiiehe x<sup>v</sup>anuuatō aməšahe</i>	
<i>upa θbarštahe jaṇmiiām</i>	
<i>aēuuām vā auui xšapanəm</i>	<i>vacat</i>
<i>duiiē vā paṇcāsātəm vā</i>	<i>vacat</i>

The translation of the first four lines is more or less uncontroversial:<sup>3</sup> ‘If indeed men would have worshipped me with a prayer where my name is mentioned, as other gods are worshipped with a prayer where (their) name is mentioned...’ But from this point on interpretations differ. Bartholomae – Wolff give the following translation of the next four lines: "(so) würde ich mich – eignen sonnigen unsterblichen Lebens – mit dem Alter der bestimmten Zeit zu den ašagläubigen Männern aufmachen; mit (dem Alter) der bestimmten (Zeit) würde ich auf eine Nacht oder zwei oder fünfzig hinzukommen". The renderings of Geldner<sup>4</sup>, Lommel<sup>5</sup> and Darmesteter<sup>6</sup> are essentially the same. It is clear that the interpretation of *θbaršta- zruuan-* as ‘bestimmte Zeit’ does not give a satisfactory translation of the passage.

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Gershevitch renders the passage differently: "I should go forth to men who own Truth, for the duration of a limited time; interrupting my own radiant immortal life I should come". In his comment on Yt 10.55 (1959: 207), Gershevitch objects to Bartholomae’s interpretation: "The same sentence occurs, apart from st. 74, also in Yt 8.11, where after *jaṇmyām* the following additional words occur: *aēvām vā avi xšapanəm duyē vā paṇcāsātəm vā* ‘for one night, or two,

<sup>3</sup>See Gershevitch 1959: 326f on the deviant interpretation of these lines by Thieme. Note that the optative perfect has the meaning of irrealis (Kellens 1984: 422ff.), which is not always reflected in older translations.

<sup>4</sup>1881: 467: "...so würde ich den gerechten männern zur bestimmten zeit mich einfinden zu der innerhalb meines langen [ewigen] lebens bestimmten (zeit) erscheinen..."

<sup>5</sup>1927: 51: "... so käme ich zu den wahrhaftigen Männern (zur bestimmten Lebens-(?)zeit?) (eigenen glänzenden, unsterblichen Lebens?) würde ich (zur bestimmten?) herbeikommen..."

<sup>6</sup>"...je viendrais, a l'appel des justes au temps fixé, je viendrais au moment fixé de ma belle vie immortelle..."

or fifty'. This addition suggests that *ǧwaršta-* refers to a *limited*, rather than an *appointed* time. Semantically either interpretation is compatible with the basic meaning of *ǧwaršta-*, which is 'cut'. As to *upa.ǧwarštahe*, which appears to be a compound constituting the verbal part of the genitive absolute clause (lit. 'my own ... life being interrupted'), the meaning here assumed for it is based on that of *upa.ǧwaršti-* and *upa.ǧwərəsa-* '(artificial) cutting, breach, opening (of a dike, respectively house)'."

I do not think that the criticism of Gershevitch is justified. As already mentioned above, *ǧbərəs-* without preverbs only means 'to create, allot', whereas *upa* in the line *upa ǧbarštahe jaymiiām* rather belongs to *jaymiiām* (*upa-√gam-* 'to go to'; see already Geldner 1881: 478). In the other passages, the meaning 'interrupted life' for *ǧbaršta-* *zruuan-* is out of the question. Moreover, *āiiu* can hardly mean "for the duration of". Most probably, *āiiu* stands in the function of the accusative of relation (Reichelt 1909: 229f.) 'in regard to the age, as far as the age is concerned'. It is also conceivable that *āiiu* is a gloss for *zrū*. As *zrū* /*zruuənh*/ must be read in two syllables (see below), we then get a regular eight syllable line by leaving out *āiiu*.<sup>7</sup>

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If we understand *ǧbarštahe zrū (āiiu)* as 'of the allotted life-time', we get a clear contrast between the mortals, who are *ǧbarštahe zrū āiiu*, and the immortal deity (Tištrya in Yt 8, Miθra in Yt 10), who is *x<sup>v</sup>ahe gaiiehe x<sup>v</sup>anuuatō aməšahe ǧbarštahe* 'of the allotted radiant immortal life'.<sup>8</sup> I therefore propose the following translation of the second part of Yt 8.11: '(If men would have worshipped me properly,) I would have gone forth to the truthful men [with the age] of the allotted life-time, I would have come, I of the allotted radiant immortal life, for one night, for two or for fifty'.

The last passage that contains *ǧbaršta-* *zruuan-* is Yt 5.129, where we find a description of Anāhitā's beaver garment. We are told that this garment is made of thirty she-beavers, each of which has given birth four times. At this point she-beavers are at their very best: they are then at their furriest and spend much time under water. Then the text continues:

*yaθa.kərətəm ǧbarštāi zrūne*  
*carəmə<sup>o</sup> vaēnaṇtō brāzəṇta*  
*frēna ərəzatəm zaranim.*

Bartholomae – Wolff: "Bei richtiger Bereitung zur vorgeschriebenen Zeit strahlen die Felle auf die Beschauer Silber und Gold(glanz) in Fülle", and a similar translation is also given by Lommel, Geldner, and Darmesteter, minor differences being due to various interpretations of the

<sup>7</sup>Geldner 1877: 115, 1881: 478 proposed to restore the metre by removing the first *šu-* of *šušuiiām*, which was correctly dismissed by Bartholomae 1892: 292f.

<sup>8</sup>Note that the phrase *x<sup>v</sup>ahe gaiiehe x<sup>v</sup>anuuatō aməšahe* is also attested in Y 9.1, where Zarathustra says after meeting Haoma for the first time: "You are the most beautiful creature of the whole world, which I have ever seen in my radiant immortal life".

unclear *frēna*.<sup>9</sup> It is difficult to tell what exactly the hapax *yaθa.kərətəm* means in this context. 78  
 Its Sanskrit equivalent *yathākṛtām* can be rendered ‘according to common practice’. We may therefore assume that *yaθa.kərətəm* has the meaning ‘usually, normally’ and render *θbarštāi zrūne* as ‘to the allotted life-time’, i.e. ‘if that life-time is allotted [to the she-beavers]’. The passage can be translated as follows: ‘Normally, if this age is allotted [to them], the furs shine upon the viewer (like) silver and gold’.

2.3. We may conclude that the typical Yasht expression *θbaršta- zruuan-* means ‘allotted life-time’, whereas outside this collocation *zruuan-* can be rendered ‘a period of time, time-span’. Outside the Yashts, we find the same range of meanings. In the *Vīdēvdād*, we come across two instances of *zruuan-* in interrogative sentences: V 6.1, 7.45, 47, 49 *cuuantəm drājō zruuānəm* ‘for a period of which length ...?’ and V 2.20 (within the Pahl. translation), 7.3 *cuuantəm zruuānəm* ‘for how long ...?’ (similarly, N 12, for which see below, § 3). In F 4c (Klingenschmitt 1968: No. 235), *zruuan-* has the meaning ‘the term (of court examination)’. It is only within late Zoroastrianism that *zruuan-* gets the abstract meaning ‘time (in general), the god Time’, attested in V 19.13, 19, Ny 1.8, Y 72.10.

### 3. The inflection of *zruuan-*.

The inflection of this word is unique. We find the following forms:

Nom. *zruua* (?)

Acc. *zruuānəm*

Dat. *zrūne*

Gen. *zrū*, (*zruuānahe*)

Loc. *zru*, *zrūne* (?)

Let us first look at the separate forms. In Y 72.10, V 19.13, 16, S 1.21 and Vyt 24, the gen. sg. of the deified ‘Time’ appears as thematic *zruuānahe* (*zruuānahe akaranahe*, followed in Y 72.10 and S 1.2 by *zruuānahe darəyō.x<sup>v</sup>aδātahe*). It is clear that this form has arisen due to the transposition of the formula *zruuānəm akaranəm yazamaide*, *zruuānəm darəyō.x<sup>v</sup>aδātəm yazamaide* ‘we worship the Boundless Time, we worship the Eternal Time’ (Ny 1.8, S 2.21). The old genitive *zrū* was so aberrant that the creation of a thematic paradigm on the basis of the acc. sg. is understandable. In Pahlavī, this thematicized form is reflected in *zurwān* [zwlw’n] ‘time, (deified) Time’.

In V 19.9 we find a confusion of another type. The passage reads *daθaṭ Spəntō Mainiiuš, daθaṭ Spəntō Mainiiuš zrūne akarane*. Bartholomae assumed that the last two words stand in the

<sup>9</sup> Bartholomae’s analysis of this word as a loc.sg. of an *i*-stem “Fülle, Menge” and Gershevitch’s suggestion (1959: 178) to see here the middle participle \**frāna-* ‘replete’ from *par-* ‘to fill’ do not seem very probable. Cf., however, Thieme 1960: 270ff.

locative (similarly, Reichelt 1909: 263, Darmesteter), *zrūne* being a rhyming "thematic" locative. For confusions of this kind see V 4.45 *paiti asne paiti xšafne* 'at day, at night' instead of correct Yt 1.9,16, V 4.1, G 3.7 *paiti asni paiti xšafne*; similarly *naēme asne ... naēme xšafne*. On the other hand, a dative cannot be excluded either: 'S.M. created (it), S.M. created for Boundless Time'. This would mean that it is rather *akarana-* that has a wrong (rhyming) ending.

Hoffmann (1967: 33f. = 1976: 490; 1970: 190 = 1975: 277) has convincingly explained the gen.sg. *zrū* as coming from *\*zruuū* < *\*zruuō* < *\*zruuōgh* (< *\*zruuānh*), parallel to LAv. *hū* (gen.sg. of *huuarə* 'sun') < *\*huuū* < *\*huuō* < *\*huuōgh*, GAv. *x<sup>v</sup>ōng*.

Theoretically, the dat.sg. *zrūne* can reflect *\*zruuune* < *\*zruuōne* < *\*zruuane*, but the metre of Yt 5.129 *yaθa.kərətəm θβarštāi zrūne* shows that *zrūne* counts two syllables, while contractions of the type *\*-uuō* > *-ū-*, *\*-auō* > *-ao-*, etc. are clearly of a later date than the compilation of the Yashts (cf. Geldner 1877: 1ff.; for instance, *daiḡhaom* < *\*daiḡhauōm* must be read in three syllables in Yt 10.2,26). It is therefore more probable that *zrūne* reflects *\*zrune* with zero-grade of the suffix. A short *u* often appears lengthened in Avestan for no apparent reason, so that long *ū* in *zrūne* is insignificant (cf. also *sūne*, dat.sg. of the word for 'dog'). Note that *ū* may also have been taken over from the genitive *zrū*.

The loc.sg. seems to be attested in N 12, which reads: *yauuaṭ aētahmīia<sup>+</sup> zru staotanəm yesnīianəm dādrājōiš* 'until you have learned S.Y. during this period of time (?)'. The text is late and poorly preserved, but if we take the form *zru* seriously, we may assume that at a stage when the gen.sg. still was *\*zruuō*, an analogical locative *\*zruui* was created, which then underwent a similar chain of developments: *\*zruui* > *\*zruuū* > *\*zrū*. Alternatively, we may assume that the author of this text used the genitive instead of the locative, which is not surprising in view of the ongoing case syncretism of that period.

The nom.sg. *zruua* is only attested in Farhang-i-Ōīm (20 = Klingenschmitt 1968: No. 627). No grammatical information can be gleaned from the compound *zruuō.dāta-* 'created by Time' (V 19.29), as it simply reflects the normal compound form of the *n*-stems.

### 3.1. The attested forms thus point to the following (Late) Avestan paradigm:

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[Nom. *zruua*]  
Acc. *zruuānəm*  
Dat. *\*zrune*  
Gen. *\*zruuōnh*

This paradigm is irregular: the genitive is that of the neuters, whereas the accusative unequivocally points to the masculine gender. There can be no doubt that the genitive *\*zruuōnh* is old. This genitive of the neuter (*r/n*)-stems is very archaic and occurs only with a few words in Avestan (cf. Hoffmann – Forssman 1996: 153), viz., with *r/n*-stems: GAv. *x<sup>v</sup>ōng*, LAv. *hū* 'sun' (nom.sg. *huuarə-cā*), GAv. *rāzōng* 'pronouncement' (nom.sg. *rāzarō*), probably *yā<sup>o</sup>* 'year' <

\**jaH-ənh* (nom.sg. *yārə*); with *n*-stems: GAv. *cašmāṅg* ‘eye’, GAv. *haxmāṅg* ‘community’ (nom.sg. YH *haxmā*). We can only speculate why this archaic genitive \**zruuənh* was preserved in Late Avestan. If the meaning ‘life-time, age’ was original, the construction with a genitive ‘of age’ could be fairly frequent.

On the other hand, the accusative *zruuānəm* is of a productive type. It seems likely that its origin is due to the influence of *uruuan-* ‘soul’, which inflects in LAv. as follows: nom.sg. *uruua*, acc. *uruuānəm*, dat. *urune*, gen. *urunō*. The dative *zrūne* may have had a pivoting function, since it was a dat.sg. of the hysterodynamic type (like *urune*). The change of gender from neuter to masculine is not surprising: for instance, *karšuuarə* n. ‘part of the earth’ occurs sometimes as feminine (loc.pl. *vīspāhu karšuuōhu* Yt 10.16), while its genitive *karšuuānō* (Vr 10.1) has an ending that belongs to the masculine paradigm. In general, neuter *n*-stems and *r/n*-stems show ongoing disintegration in Late Avestan. Especially the system of the oblique cases has collapsed:

*baēuuarə* n. ‘ten thousand, myriad’ has *baēuuān*, *baēuuāni* as its nom.pl., but in the oblique cases we find complete chaos: *baēuuarāi* *baēuuānō* ‘thousand times thousand’ in Yt 3.10, 4.2, Vyt 19, incidentally called by Bartholomae (p. 1796) “Wertlose Stellen”, gen.pl. *baēuuaranəm*.

*karšuuarə* n. ‘part of the earth’ has preserved the old nom.-acc.pl. *karšuuān* (F 5 *karšuuānəm*) in a standing expression *hapta karšuuān* ‘the seven parts of the earth’ (cf. also loc.pl. *haptō.karšuuōhuua* Yt 6.3), but outside this expression, we find loc.pl.fem.(!) *vīspāhu karšuuōhu* (Yt 10.16), gen.sg. *karšuuānō* (Vr 10.1), which are mentioned above.

*ḡanuuarə* n. ‘bow’ is used also in the function of the nom.pl.; the abl.sg. is attested in the thematicized form *ḡanuuanāṭ* (Yt 10.39).

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*azan-* n. ‘day’: thematic forms loc.sg. *asne*, abl.sg. *asnāaṭ*.

The other *r/n*-stems are only attested in the nom.-acc. sg., but there are indications that the *r*-stem has become generalized. For instance, *dasuuarə* n. ‘health’ has become indeclinable, the nom.-acc. form being also used for the oblique cases. The compound *snāuuarə.bāzura-* ‘having arms full of sinews’ (V 14.9) indicates that the *r*-stem has been used as a weak form.

**3.2.** As the accusative *zruuānəm* is likely to be secondary, what was the original nominative-accusative of the paradigm? We have seen in the preceding section that the genitives in \*-*anh* belong either to *n*-stem neuters or to *r/n*-stem neuters. *Zruuan-* can hardly be a pure *n*-stem, since \*-*uan-* does not form neuters in Sanskrit and Avestan. We find either adjectives or masculines: GAv. *ašuuān-* ‘truthful’ (Skt. *ṛtāvan-*), GAv. *isuuān-* ‘being lord of’ (Skt. *īśvara-*), Skt. *pīvan-* ‘fat’, etc.; GAv. *aduuan-*, LAv. *aδβan-* ‘way’ (Skt. *ádhrvan-*), LAv. *aḡauruuān-* ‘priest’ (Skt. *átharvan-*), etc. It has sometimes been assumed (cf. Beekes 1988: 120f.) that GAv. *sāhuuan-* ‘doctrine’, only attested in acc.pl. *sāx<sup>v</sup>ənī*, is a neuter of this type, but in reality it is an *r/n*-stem,

cf. Skt. *śāsus-* < PIr. *\*śaHs-ur* (Wackernagel – Debrunner 1954: 489, Hoffmann 1974: 25 = 1975: 337) and GAv. *sax<sup>v</sup>ārō*, which most probably belongs to the same word.<sup>10</sup>

We must conclude that *zruuan-* originally was a neuter with the suffix *\*-uer-/ -uen-*. The nominative-accusative of these neuters ended in *\*-ur*, so that the Proto-Indo-Iranian inflection of our word was: nom.sg. *\*źrH-ur*, gen. *\*źrH-uans*.

4. We have seen in the preceding sections that the original meaning of *zruuan-* was ‘life-time, time-span’ and that the original paradigm of this word was that of a neuter with the suffix *\*-uer-/ -uen-*. These two facts vindicate the old connection with Av. *zauruuan-* m. ‘old age, senility’ (cf. also MPers. *zarwān*, Man.Sogd. *zrw*, B.Sogd. *zrwh*, Oss.Ir. *zær*, Dig. *zær(w)æ* ‘old age’) and *zaurura-* adj. ‘decrepit, senile’, both derived from the PIE root *\*ǵerh<sub>2</sub>-* ‘to become old’. As I have mentioned above, the reason why this etymology was always provided with a query is the phonetic difficulty in deriving *zruuan-* from a root in a final laryngeal. The expected reflex of PIE *\*ǵerh<sub>2</sub>-uen-* in Avestan is *zauruuan-*. How then can we account for *zruuan-*?

4.1. As I have tried to show elsewhere (Lubotsky 1997), Proto-Indo-European sequences *\*CRHUV-*<sup>11</sup> yielded different reflexes in Indo-Iranian, depending on the place of the accent. The sequence *\*CRHUV-* yields the “long” reflex, which corresponds to the normal outcome of *\*RH* between consonants, cf.

Skt. *tūr<sup>h</sup>vati*, Av. *tauruuaieiti* ‘to overcome’ < PIE *\*trh<sub>2</sub>ue-*;  
 Skt. *tūr<sup>h</sup>vi-* ‘superior’, Av. *Tauruuiš* ‘name of a Daēva’ < PIE *\*trh<sub>2</sub>ui-*;  
 Skt. *pūr<sup>h</sup>va-*, Av. *pauruua-* (*pouruua-*), OP *paru<sup>h</sup>va-* ‘first’ < PIE *\*prH-uo-*;  
 Skt. *āti-kū<sup>h</sup>lva-*, Av. *kauruua-* ‘thin-haired’ < *\*kīH-uo-* (Lat. *calvus*).<sup>12</sup>

When the liquid of *\*CRHUV* was unaccented, we find a “short” reflex, i.e. Skt. *CurvV-* and Av. *CruuV-* (*uruuV-* in initial position), cf.

<sup>10</sup>The only pure *n*-stem neuters are words with the suffix *\*-man-* in Indo-Iranian.

<sup>11</sup>The cover symbols are: *C* = any consonant; *R* = *r, l*; *H* = any laryngeal, *U* = *i, u*; *V* = any vowel. Since vocalization remained subphonemic in Indo-Iranian until the loss of laryngeals in the separate languages, I refrain from indicating it in the reconstructions.

<sup>12</sup>The vacillating length in Sanskrit compounds (VSM 30.22 *ātikulva-*, VSK 34.4.4 *ātikū<sup>h</sup>lva-*) may be explained if we assume that the simplex originally was *\*kū<sup>h</sup>lva-*. In the compound *ātikulva-* we find the expected short reflex in an unaccented position, whereas in *ātikū<sup>h</sup>lva-* the long vowel of the simplex was introduced. Incidentally, it must be emphasized that the usual translation of *\*kū<sup>h</sup>lva-* and Av. *kauruua-* as ‘bald’ cannot be correct. Baldness is an absolute notion and one cannot be *ātikū<sup>h</sup>lva-* ‘excessively bald’. In the VS, *ātikū<sup>h</sup>lva-* is opposed to *ātilomaśa-* ‘excessively hairy’, and the translation ‘excessively thin-haired’ seems appropriate. The same is valid for Avestan. In Yt 8.21, the daēva Apaoša appears in the shape of a black horse, which is *kauruua-*, *kauruuō.gaoša-*, *kauruuō.barōša-*, *kauruuō.dūma-* ‘thin-haired, with thin-haired ears, with a thin-haired mane, with a thin-haired tail’. Evidently, ‘bald mane’ and ‘bald tail’, which commonly appear in the translations, do not make sense.



Skt. *turyāma*, *tuturyāt*, *turvāṇe*, adj. *turvāṇi-*, *tuturvāṇi-*, NPr. *Turvīti-* < PIE *\*trh<sub>2</sub>u-*;  
 Skt. *urvārā-* f. 'harvest field', Av. *uruuārā-* f. (mostly pl.) 'plants' < PIE *\*h<sub>2</sub>rh<sub>3</sub>-uér-*;  
 Av. *uruiāpa-* 'of broad waters' < PIE *\*h<sub>1</sub>urHu-ih<sub>2</sub>-* (cf. Skt. *urvyūti-* 'of far-reaching help');  
 GAv. *uruuānē* inf. 'to choose' < PIE *\*ulHuén-* (cf. Skt. *turvāṇe*, *dāvāṇe*).<sup>13</sup>

Let us now return to the inflection of *zruuan-*. One of the types of Indo-European *r/n-* neuters had mobile accentuation, the nom.-acc. being accented on the root and the oblique cases accented on the suffix (cf. Skt. nom.-acc. *yákr̥t*, gen. *yaknás*). In Avestan, this type is attested by nom.sg. *huuārə(-cā)* 'sun' < *\*huṽar* < PIIr. *\*súH-r̥* and the gen.sg. *x<sup>v</sup>ōṇg* < *\*huuən̥h* < PIIr. *\*suH-áns*. As indicated by Hoffmann (1967: 34 = 1976: 490), the difference in anlaut between the nom.sg. *huuārə* and the gen.sg. *x<sup>v</sup>ōṇg* is likely to be due to the accent: *\*húṽar* yields *huuārə*, whereas *\*huuən̥h* yields *x<sup>v</sup>ōṇg*. If our word belonged to this type, its paradigm was *\*zr̥H-ur*, *zr̥H-uáns*, and the accentuation on the suffix in Av. *zrū* < *\*zr̥Huáns* is what we expect.<sup>14</sup>

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5. Finally, we have to discuss the derivational history of Avestan *zauruuan-* 'old age, senility', *zruuan-* 'life-time, time-span', *zaurura-* 'decrepit, senile'. The Proto-Indo-European word for 'old age' probably had the following inflection: nom.sg. *\*gérh<sub>2</sub>-ur*, gen. *\*grh<sub>2</sub>-uéns*. Usually, paradigms of this type generalized zero-grade of the root in Proto-Indo-Iranian, and I believe that this is what happened in this word, too: the paradigm *\*gérh<sub>2</sub>-ur*, *\*grh<sub>2</sub>-uéns* was leveled to PIIr. *\*zr̥H-ur*, *zr̥H-uáns*. At that stage, the thematic adjective *\*zr̥H-ur-a-* 'characteristic of old age, decrepit, senile' > Av. *zaurura-* was formed on the basis of the nom.-acc. As argued above, the stem of *zruuan-* has arisen in the oblique cases.

Let us now look at the actually attested forms of *zauruuan-* 'old age, senility'. It occurs five times: three times as the nom.sg. *zauruua* (Y 9.5, V 19.43, F 20), and two times as the acc.sg., viz. *zaouruuam* (Yt 9.10) and *zauruuānəm* (V 13.28). The acc.sg. form *zaouruuam* can only be explained as a secondary formation to the nominative *zauruua* (cf. Bartholomae GIP: 225), which was ambiguous: it could be seen as a nom.sg. of an *ā*-stem or of an *n*-stem. This suggests that the nominative *zauruua* presumably was the only case of this stem and the speakers of Avestan were uncertain about the other cases. If we now combine this observation with the fact that the nom.sg. of *zruuan-* is only attested in the Farhang, it becomes tempting to speculate that *zauruua* was the original nominative to *zrū* < *\*zruuanh*. In other words, the nominative of the PIIr. paradigm *\*zr̥H-ur*, *zr̥H-uáns* was replaced by *\*zr̥H-ua* (analogical to words like GAv. nom. *cašma*, gen. *cašmōṇg* 'eye').

<sup>13</sup>For further examples and a discussion of the phonetic justification for the proposed distribution I refer the reader to the above-mentioned article.

<sup>14</sup>Pahl. *zurwān* [zwłw'n] 'time; the god Time, Zurvan' points to the vocalization *\*zruan-* with regular representation of *r̥* by *ur* in the neighborhood of the labials (cf. Pahl. *gurg* 'wolf' < *\*urka-*; *purs-išn* 'question' < *\*pr̥s-*, *murw* 'bird' < *\*mr̥ga-*, etc.). This vocalization is also compatible with Man.Sogd. (')*zrw* 'Zurvan', *zwrnyy* 'period' (Gershevitch 1954: 139). As I have argued in Lubotsky 1997: 147, however, it is likely that Proto-Iranian *\*Cruu* regularly developed to *\*Cru* = *\*Cru* in Middle Iranian.

When \**zr̥H-ua* yielded \**zar̥ua* > *zauruua*, while \**zr̥H-uāns* yielded \**zruuənh* > *zrū*, it was only natural that the original paradigm fell apart: the nom.sg. *zauruua* needed new oblique cases, whereas the gen. \**zruuənh* needed new strong cases. The semantic development from ‘old age’ to ‘life-time’ (→ ‘time-span, long period’) for *zruuan-* is not uncommon (cf. German *Alter*, SCr. *stārost*).

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